Desserts / France

Crêpes Suzette

The grand finale of the old French dining room — gossamer-thin crêpes folded into quarters and bathed in a glossy beurre Suzette of caramelized sugar, fresh orange juice and butter, then set alight tableside with a hiss of Grand Marnier until the flames die to a lacquer of warm citrus and toffee.

Time 90 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 100 parts Plain flour (sifted)
- ☐ 100 parts Eggs (whole, room temperature)
- ☐ 250 parts Whole milk
- ☐ 30 parts Browned butter (for the batter, cooled)
- ☐ 15 parts Caster sugar (for the batter)
- ☐ 2 parts Fine sea salt
- ☐ 80 parts Caster sugar (for the caramel sauce)
- ☐ 70 parts Unsalted butter (for the sauce, cold, cubed)
- ☐ 200 parts Oranges (zest + freshly squeezed juice)
- ☐ 40 parts Grand Marnier (orange liqueur)

Let's make it.

01 Whisk the flour, sugar and salt in a bowl, make a well, and crack in the eggs. Whisk from the centre outward, drawing in the flour, then pour in the milk in a slow stream to keep the batter lump-free. Whisk in the cooled browned butter. The batter should be thin — the consistency of single cream. Strain it through a sieve and rest, covered, in the fridge for at least 30 minutes to let the gluten relax and the bubbles settle.

02 Heat a 22 cm crêpe or non-stick pan over medium heat and wipe it with a film of butter. Lift the pan, ladle in just enough batter to coat the base, and immediately swirl it into a thin, even round, pouring any excess back. Cook 45-60 seconds until the edges lift and the underside is lacy and golden, then flip and cook 20-30 seconds more. Stack the finished crêpes on a plate as you go; the first one is always the test.

03 Zest the oranges and squeeze the juice. In a wide skillet, melt the sauce sugar over medium heat without stirring, swirling the pan as it liquefies, until it turns a clear amber caramel. Stand back and carefully pour in the orange juice — it will sputter and seize — then add the zest and simmer, stirring, until the hardened caramel dissolves back into a smooth, syrupy sauce.

04 Drop the heat to low. Whisk the cold cubed butter into the warm orange caramel a few pieces at a time, letting each addition melt and emulsify before adding more. The sauce should turn satiny, opaque and slightly thickened — a true beurre Suzette. Keep it just warm; do not let it boil hard or the butter will split and the sauce will turn greasy.

05 One at a time, lay each crêpe in the warm sauce, turn to coat both sides, then fold in half and in half again into a neat triangle, nudging it to the side of the pan. Repeat until all the crêpes are folded and overlapping in the sauce, basting them with a spoon so each absorbs the orange-butter and glistens.

06 Off the heat, pour the Grand Marnier over the crêpes. Return the pan to the flame and tilt it slightly toward the burner (or touch a long match to the edge) so the warmed alcohol vapour catches and bursts into blue flame. Let it burn down on its own, swirling the pan, until the flames die and the sauce reduces to a final glossy lacquer. Plate the folded crêpes at once and spoon the remaining sauce over the top.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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